



Creating Carer Friendly Communities

Impact Review 2025





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The images and quotes used throughout this report are from real Carers and families we support. To protect privacy, quotes may not belong to the individuals shown in photographs.

CEO Welcome



2025 has been a landmark year for Forward Carers.

Across the year, we were honoured to win the Carers UK Outstanding Carer Service Award, to be named one of the UK's Top 100 Social Enterprises in the SE100 index and to be shortlisted as a Diversity Pioneer in the SE100 Awards. This national recognition reflects the quality and ambition we bring to our work.

We expanded our reach by launching the Sandwell Carers Service and strengthening our all-age model through the Birmingham Young Carers Service alongside the Birmingham Carers Hub. We also secured significant new investment, including a three-year programme to improve Carer emotional and mental wellbeing in Birmingham. And we concluded our 10-year anniversary celebrations with a Carers Art Exhibition at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, creating a public platform for Carers' voices and lived experience.

This year, we supported over 8,000 Carers and delivered more than 2,100 statutory Carer's Assessments, with 98% reporting high satisfaction. Carers told us they felt more confident, more connected and better equipped to manage their caring role.

We strengthened our infrastructure and influence. Over 400 Carers shaped our statutory-compliant online Carer's Assessment. Through co-production, we launched the Peace of Mind emergency planning toolkit and expanded our Carer Friendly healthcare campaign, improving identification and access to support.

We introduced live impact dashboards for Commissioners, providing real-time performance

and outcomes data that demonstrates the value of commissioned services in an increasingly challenging financial environment.

My thanks go to the Carers for all they do, and to our Partners, volunteers and funders who make this possible.

Simon Fenton
Chief Executive

Strategic Goals: In 2026, we will...

- Expand access options, including full roll-out of online Carer's Assessments and testing AI-enabled tools alongside human support.
- Work with Carers and sector leaders to develop national standards for high-quality online Carer's Assessments.
- Extend live public impact dashboards to increase transparency and demonstrate measurable difference.
- Develop a bereavement offer to support Carers through loss and transition.
- Establish a suicide prevention protocol with national experts.
- Increase access to Carer ID and discount schemes, progressing a national card model to enhance recognition and opportunity for families.

Mission, Vision, Values



Vision

To be recognised as a leader for innovative Carer Friendly programmes and impactful Carer support and provision, helping to shape a world where Carers are understood, valued and supported to live a full life alongside their caring role.

Mission

We are a Community Interest Company and Social Enterprise. 100% of our surplus is reinvested into our mission to deliver better outcomes for unpaid Carers by creating Carer Friendly Communities. Places where Carers are seen, heard and valued.

Our Values



Fulfilling Potential

We challenge ourselves to continually innovate so Carers, partners, our staff and communities always fulfil their potential.



Family Centred

We place Carers, families and their networks at the heart of what we do.



Impact Driven

We continually evaluate and improve our services so we can ensure we're delivering the best outcomes for Carers.



Stronger in Partnership

We believe the best outcomes for Carers are achieved by working in partnership to meet the varied needs of our diverse communities.



Socially Responsible

We improve equality for Carers and through our work, we will leave the community and our planet in a better place.



The Case for Supporting Carers

Across the UK, 5.8 million people are unpaid Carers, supporting loved ones who are older, disabled, or seriously ill. The economic value of unpaid care is estimated at £184 billion per year, broadly equivalent to annual NHS spending.

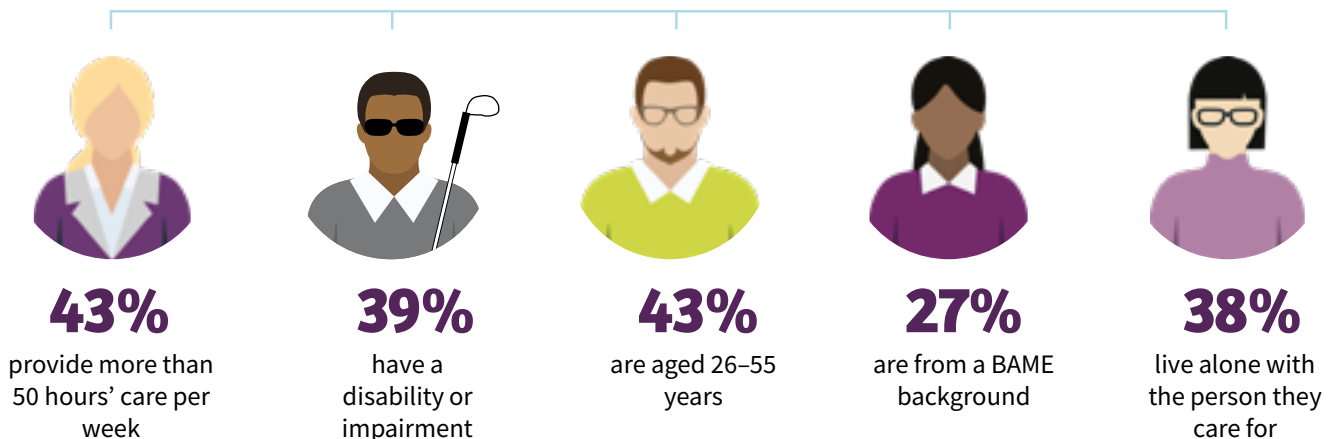
Caring often comes at significant personal cost. Carers are more likely to experience poor physical and mental health, financial hardship, and reduced employment opportunities. One in four Carers reports being in 'not good health', rising to one in three for those providing 50 or more hours of care each week. Millions of Carers

balance paid work alongside caring responsibilities, with many reducing hours or leaving employment altogether, creating significant social and economic impact.

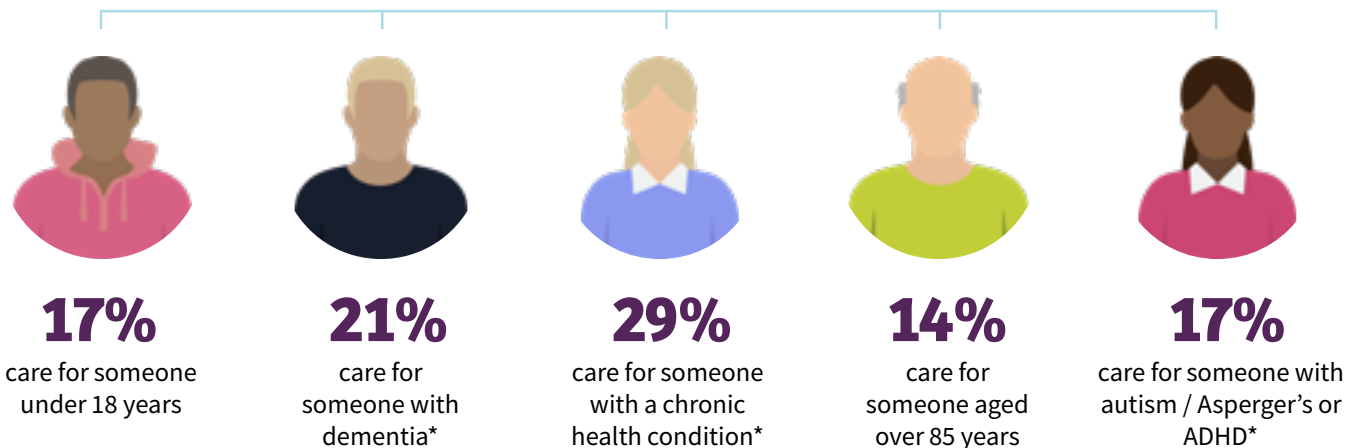
Early, preventative support improves wellbeing, sustains caring relationships, and reduces pressure on statutory services.

Our support for Carers is essential to resilient families, communities, and systems.

Who are the Carers we support?



Who do they care for?



* Cared-for primary and secondary health conditions

Quality and Equity



We bring our values into measurable action so we know we are always upholding them.



Forward Carers Reviews

Read Customer Service Reviews of forwardcarers.org.uk

Quality

is created through shared standards and systems across Delivery Partners, ensuring Carers experience reliable, high-quality support across services. 98% of Carers rated their experience of support as good or very good.

Equity

recognises that Carers do not experience caring — or support — equally. We actively consider who may face barriers to access, trust or engagement, and are working to design services to respond to difference rather than assume a single approach works for all.

Carers Voice

is central to maintaining quality and accountability. Through Carers Voice and our Carer Ambassador Board, lived experience directly informs service design, improvement and organisational decisions.

Case study:

Strengthening equity in practice

In 2025, we established an Equity Task and Finish Group with delivery and community partners. The group provides structured challenge and shared learning, helping translate equity principles into practical action and informing senior leadership decisions.

Looking ahead

In 2026/27, we will continue to strengthen quality, equity and accountability by:

- **Sharing our net zero progress and carbon emissions publicly**
- **Sharing learning and actions from our equity work transparently**

“It was great to be recognised again for the input, time, and commitment we give to Forward Carers as Ambassadors. The lived experiences that we have ensure that we remain relevant and accountable to the unpaid Carers we support.”

Sylvia Johnson-Davis, Carer Ambassador



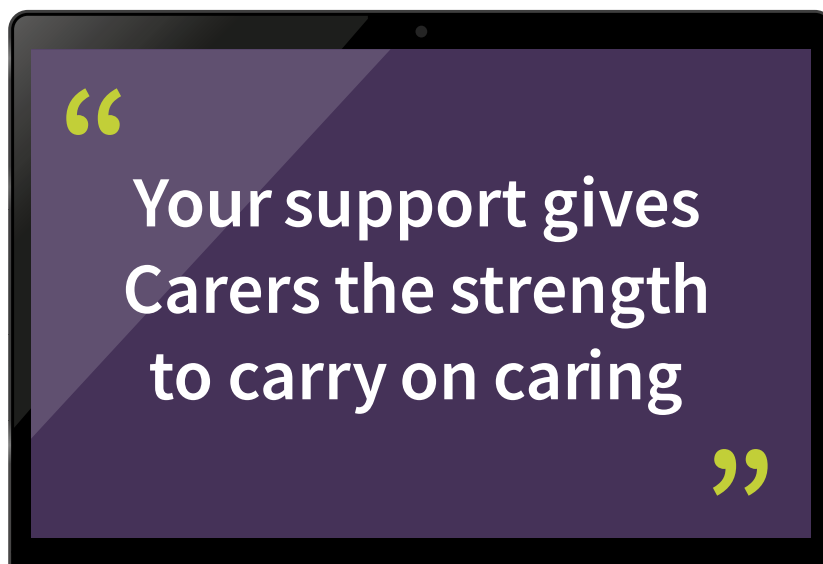
Forward Carers' wonderful Ambassadors receiving a certificate of thanks from us

Delivering Impact

We measure impact to understand whether support leads to meaningful change in Carers' lives. Our Impact Framework is built around outcomes shaped by Carers themselves, combining wellbeing data, lived experience insight and service quality assurance to help us understand both what changes and why.

In the last year:

- 66% of Carers experienced an improvement in overall wellbeing following support
- 18% average improvement across wellbeing domains
- 76% of Carers felt more confident in their caring role
- 80% of Carers felt more positive about caring



We also measure our impact on the system. In 2025, for every £1 invested in Forward Carers for Carer support, we saved the social care system £10.90.

We believe in transparency. Our live commissioner dashboards include unfiltered Carer feedback. We're confident we get it right most of the time — and when we don't, we use that insight to learn and improve. In Carers' words: "This support continues to give Carers the strength to carry on caring for our loved ones".

Looking ahead

In 2026/27 we will embed live impact dashboards into our website, extending transparency and access to real-time learning.

Digital Innovation

We have been providing online support to Carers since 2017. Our digital services provide flexible access to information, tools and support. Digital is embedded into how we work. We use data responsibly to target relevant information to specific groups of Carers. Our AI-supported chat tools help Carers navigate information and access support more easily, including outside traditional service hours.

- 196,527 Carers accessed online services via 186,878 digital visits across our platforms
- 2,065 Hidden Carers self-identified and registered as a Carer online

Looking ahead: In 2026/27 we will launch our statutory compliant AI-enabled Carer's Assessments. Our new online pathway icaspar (intelligent Carer Assessment, Support Plan and Review) forms a central pillar of our future digital infrastructure. Developed with Carers, it supports scalable online assessment and review while protecting privacy and giving Carers the time and choice they tell us they need.

Social Value **Creating Carer Friendly Communities**

Social value at a glance (2025):

- 48 Carer Champions trained, supporting over 10,000 staff
- 130 GP surgeries and pharmacies supported to identify Carers
- £2.79 million invested through VCSE partnerships and local delivery
- 182 employers and organisations supported to become more Carer Friendly

In every contract we deliver, we bring additional value, including securing further funding and sourcing significant additional support and services for Carers. Read more in our services pages.

Case study:

We offer our Carer Friendly training and Carer Friendly Workplace support for free to all our non-profit partners. In 2025, Action for Children achieved our Carer Friendly Employer Commitment Mark for empowering staff to successfully balance work and care. [Find out more.](#)



Stronger in Partnership

We believe the best outcomes for Carers are achieved by working in partnerships that meet the varied needs of our diverse communities.

In 2025, together with our fantastic Delivery Partners, we...



Registered 5,364 new Carers for help and services



Provided 3,979 one to one support sessions



Undertook 2,131 statutory Carer's Assessments



Supported 219,800 Carers through online support



Delivered 989 groups, attended by 7,130 Carers



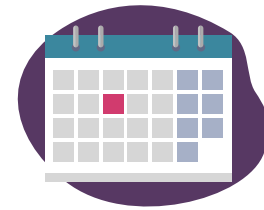
Registered 270 Carer Friendly Businesses



Helped Carers to access an average of £254 per person weekly through welfare entitlements



Distributed £392,400 Household Support Funds to Carers facing hardship



Participated in 35 events to improve Carer identification among health professionals

“Unpaid carers are often invisible and the work we do goes mostly unnoticed. It was lovely to have someone listen and acknowledge me. Made me feel seen and appreciated.”

Carer following Carer's Assessment, July 2025

Family & Carer Centred

We place Carers, families and their networks at the heart of what we do.

In 2025, together with our fantastic Delivery Partners we:



Provided specialist support to 732 Parent Carers and families



Distributed 1,731 Wellbeing Grants totalling £519,300



Undertook 377 Wellbeing Checks for Parent Carers



Gave 334 Max Cards to families to enjoy time out together



Funded 161 nights' hotel breaks through our partner Carefree



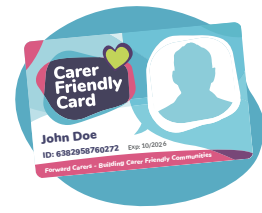
Supported 416 Young Adult Carers to achieve their goals



Engaged with over 120 Carers face-to-face to co-design support



Provided 474 Specialist Dementia Carer Assessments



Helped 3,289 Carers feel seen with a Carer Friendly ID Card

“I know that my feedback is listened to and it’s great to feel by sharing my experiences I’m helping to shape support for other Carers.”

Carers Voice volunteer

Fulfilling Potential

We challenge ourselves to continually innovate so Carers, partners, our staff and communities always fulfil their potential.

In 2025, together with our fantastic Delivery Partners we:



Worked with over 200 health professionals to improve recognition of Carers



Ran 31 Carer Friendly Workplace sessions, supporting workers balancing work and care



Trained 48 Carer Champions to help Carers remain in the workplace successfully



Delivered 20 specialist training courses for Carers



Funded 16 Carer Projects to provide specialist support



Distributed £51,000 to 111 Carer groups to improve social connections



Benefitted from over 1,000 volunteer hours



Gave out 54 data sims to help digitally excluded Carers to stay connected



Supported 256 Young Adult Carers to fulfil their ambitions in education or work

“The Carers Assessment has brought about a desperately needed change. We would not have been able to achieve what we did at such pace and speed without their help and support.”

Carer Feedback

Socially Responsible

We seek to reduce inequality and through our work, we will leave the community and our planet in a better place.



We pay 100% of staff the Real Living Wage



We are committed to Net Zero and publish our carbon use



We report to a Carer Ambassador Board of experts by experience

In 2025, we:



Distributed £2.79 million through our network of VCSE partners



Supported over 500 organisations to be Carer Friendly



Secured over £500,000 added value funding to improve Carer outcomes



Provided paid routes into work for 3 level three Apprentices



Launched a new volunteer scheme and recruited 4 regular volunteers



Trained 48 Carer Friendly Champions to provide support to working Carers

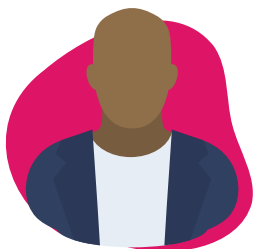
“Forward Carers isn’t just a workplace, it’s a community. They don’t just support Carers, they support each other. You taught me so much, not just about work but how to be a better, more confident person.”

Forward Carers Apprentice

Impact Driven

We continually evaluate and improve our services so we can ensure we're delivering the best outcomes for Carers

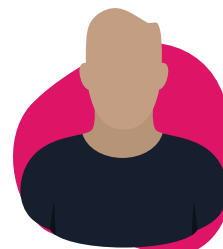
In 2025, after receiving support from Forward Carers and our Delivery Partners, Carers reported:



75% feel more confident in their caring role



80% feel more positive about caring



79% feel more knowledgeable



76% feel more socially connected



74% report improved mental health



65% report improved physical health



On average, Carers experienced an 18% improvement in their overall wellbeing



Feedback from over 500 Carers validated our impact and helped shape ways to continually improve



For every £1 invested in Forward Carers, we saved the Health and Social Care sector £10.90

‘Forward Carers are a huge support for Carers. I appreciate all the support, advice, sign posting and appreciate the listening ear that is provided. Thank you.’

Birmingham Carers Hub



Birmingham Carers Hub is delivered by 18 fantastic, local, Delivery Partners who bring deep community knowledge, trusted relationships, cultural sensitivity and specialist knowledge so Carers can access the right support at the right time via services across the city. Find out more by clicking the logo.

We provide statutory Carer's Assessments, wellbeing activities such as yoga and meditation, information and advice, training, welfare and entitlements, 121 support, Carers Emergency Response Service (CERS) and specialist support via our Parent Carers Hub, Dementia Carers Hub and Young Adult Carer services.

Birmingham is home to a diverse population of 91,500 unpaid Carers. In over a decade of delivering an evolving Carers Hub service, we have supported over 50,000 Birmingham Carers. Carers who use our services match local population demographics.

We are a prevention-focused service – we create the conditions for Carers to continue in their roles happily and healthily, so families can stay together for longer. We help Carers access support earlier, navigate complex systems more effectively and avoid situations becoming unmanageable.

In 2025:

- We supported 6,173 Carers
- 75% reported improved wellbeing
- 97% rated their experience as good or very good



“It is nice to be listened to and for something positive to come out of it.”

Statutory Support that leads to change

Our Care Act-compliant Carer’s Assessments, delivered under delegated authority from Birmingham City Council, ensure unpaid Carers can access their statutory rights and entitlements. Assessments offer protected space to explore the impact of caring, identify risks, and

agree support. Shaped by Carer feedback and grounded in measurable outcomes, assessments strengthen wellbeing, reduce breakdown risk, and support more sustainable care within communities.

In 2025:

- 2,131 statutory Carer Assessments were completed
- 1,761 Carers received wellbeing payments totalling £528,300 following assessment
- 76% of Carers reported improved overall wellbeing following Assessment
- The average wellbeing improvement was 18%
- Over 90% of Carers were supported without escalation to statutory services

Wellbeing is explored using the Care Act wellbeing areas, shaped and validated with Carers. This helps identify change across everyday aspects of life such as health, finances, relationships and having time for themselves, and supports both individual wellbeing and prevention across the wider system.

Case study: Supporting a Carer through crisis and transition

J was caring for her brother following a brain injury after a heart attack and became overwhelmed as he prepared to leave hospital. Through Birmingham Carers Hub, J received one-to-one support, guidance around Power of Attorney and advocacy with a care provider. She reported feeling calmer, more confident and better able to manage her own wellbeing, and continues to access ongoing support.

“The wellbeing payment is a Godsend as money is a constant worry at the moment.”



Personalised Support

Many Carers are navigating long-term, complex caring situations alongside other pressures such as work, parenting, health or financial strain.

In 2025:

- 33% of Carers were caring for someone with more than one condition
- 21% of caring roles had been ongoing for five years or more
- We provided specialist support for 615 Dementia Carers, 732 Parent Carers and 250 Young Adult Carers
- Our Carers Emergency Response Service (CERS) carried out 25 emergency call-outs to ensure care when crisis hit

Case Study:

K is a lone parent of five and provides over 50 hours of care for one of her children who has a range of health issues. She was experiencing significant burnout and financial pressure. Through a Carer's Assessment and wellbeing support, we helped her explore options, financial entitlements and practical support, giving her hope for the future.

Specialist Support

Alongside our core delivery, we funded 16 specialist Carer Projects to respond to different caring situations and Carer needs, including ADHD and autism, addiction, sibling Carers and counselling.

Health liaison

Birmingham Carers Hub's Health Liaison Lead works closely with GP practices, hospitals, Primary Care Networks and social prescribing teams to ensure Carers are recognised and referred into support earlier.



“I've been feeling really burnt out. Having someone to help me. I feel like I can finally start to breathe somewhat.”

In 2025:

- Over 200 Carer-focused conversations took place with health professionals
- 281 free CERS planned sitting sessions enabled Carers to attend their own health appointments

“Once staff started asking the right questions, Carers were finally being seen.”

Healthcare worker

Added and Social Value

Forward Carers secures significant additional funding and resources to extend the support available for Birmingham Carers and positively impact the local community.



BEAM: Building Emotional Awareness & Mental-health

Forward Carers also secured funding of £478,850 to deliver BEAM, a specialist mental health pathway for Birmingham Carers experiencing emotional distress, anxiety or low mood linked to caring that launched in November 2025

- 9 new mental health programmes launched with Partners
- Carer wellbeing is tracked using WEMWBS to measure impact and identify need

[Find out more](#)

Additional practical support that removes everyday barriers

In 2025, Forward Carers secured:

- 317 free bus passes in partnership with Transport for West Midlands
- 102 SIM cards were provided to Carers experiencing digital exclusion
- 981 Carers received £392,400 in Household Support Fund payments

“I really appreciated the additional money, this has been used towards the cost of gas and electricity as the heating has been on a lot over the winter. It has been wonderful to have the extra help and not have to worry so much when we needed the warmth.”

“The bus pass has opened doors for me. I can take my mum to her appointments, go to my support group, and even meet a friend for coffee – things that make a huge difference to my mental health.”



At a Glance

Birmingham Carers Hub offers city-wide access so unpaid Carers can register and access co-designed support in their area. We deliver statutory and essential services through a network of 22 Delivery Partners.

In 2025...



6,173 Carers supported and 2,224 Hidden Carers registered



1,998 statutory Carer Assessments completed



615 Dementia Carers received specialist support



1,731 Carers received wellbeing budgets totalling £519,300



14,702 attendees at 1,339 groups and training sessions



2,330 one-to-one and intensive support sessions delivered



97% of Carers rated support as good or very good



73% of Carers reported improved mental health



79% of Carers felt more knowledgeable in their caring role

Added Value



£478,850 awarded to deliver specialist Carer mental health support



£392,400 distributed to 981 Carers through the Household Support Fund



102 SIM cards worth £7,344 provided for Carers in financial strain

Birmingham Young Carers Service

in partnership
with:



The Birmingham Young Carers Service is delivered in partnership with Action for Children. The service sits alongside Birmingham Carers Hub to support children and young people aged 5–17 who help care for someone, and to ensure a smooth transition into young adult services.

At a glance

- 1,049 Carers are connected to support
- 443 Hidden Young Carers were identified
- 100% of young Carers complete an assessment to understand their needs
- 803 young Carers attended 27 groups and events

Assessments give Young Carers space to talk about their caring role. Each Young Carer receives a support plan shaped around their needs. For many young people, this is the first time they have been able to talk openly about caring and its impact.

Time Away from Caring

Having time away from caring responsibilities through group activities, day trips and residentials allows young people to relax and have fun. Spending time with other Young Carers is vital for wellbeing. In 2025, activities ranged from trips to the zoo, themed parties, youth clubs, residential trips, workshops and day trips. Transport is provided where needed so young people are not excluded.



I'd just like to say I had a wonderful day today.. I made new friends. Also, I'd like to thank staff members who were so caring and friendly. Thank you for a lovely day. It was nice to have a break from caring.



Emotional Support, Confidence & Transitions

Most Young Carers benefit from group activities and peer support. Where additional needs are identified, targeted one-to-one support is offered, providing a safe space to talk and build coping strategies.

As Young Carers grow older, the service also supports them to achieve their aspirations for education, training or work.

Case study: Building Confidence

MV is a Young Carer for her father and also has autism. She often felt anxious and found it hard to talk about how caring affected her. Through regular one-to-one sessions, tailored to how she communicates best, MV gradually began to open up. Over time, she developed strategies to manage her worries and felt more confident talking about her feelings.

- 96 Young Carers received targeted one-to-one support
- 173 supported assessments undertaken
- Young Carers are supported into Young Adult Carer services



Case study: Practical Support

KL is 13 and has cared for her father for most of her life. When her father's health worsened, the family faced additional pressure. A broken washing machine meant KL often worried about having clean clothes for school. Action for Children accessed funding to replace the washing machine. No child should have to carry worries like this.

In a Carers' words: "Thank you for everything you have done for me over the years. I genuinely wouldn't be where I am without you. You believed in me and helped me to believe in myself.. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Social value and wider impact

Alongside core service delivery, the Birmingham Young Carers Service delivers added social value through targeted funding and partnership working, enabling support that goes beyond business-as-usual provision.

- The YHA Breaks Programme provided fully-funded residential stays worth over £7,000
- Over £1,275 Nationwide Crisis funding helped families purchase items to meet immediate needs
- Over £14,000 Nationwide Enrichment funding paid for transport, tickets, venues and resources so young Carers could access a wide-range of additional opportunities

Carer Friendly Brum

Making Carers visible in everyday places



Across Birmingham, many people provide unpaid care without recognising themselves as Carers or accessing support. Thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund, we deliver Carer Friendly Brum to meet people where they are — in supermarkets, community spaces and health settings — making Carer identification part of everyday life.

We help people move from seeing themselves as “just helping out” to understanding their rights and options as an unpaid Carer

“I thought I was just looking after Mum. I didn't know there was help for that.”

Newly identified Carer.

What we did in 2025

- Delivered community pop-ups and outreach sessions in supermarkets, libraries, festivals, cafés and local venues
- Built a trusted presence in GP surgeries and health hubs, working alongside social prescribers and practice teams
- Shared clear, accessible information on Carer rights, ID cards and local support
- Held a Carers Voice art, prose and poetry exhibition at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

[Find out more](#)

2025 in numbers

- 122 pop-up and outreach events delivered across Birmingham
- 887 meaningful conversations raised Carer awareness among public and healthcare workers
- 175 new Carer registrations through Carer aware health pathways
- 15,000 members of the public reached through the Carers Art Exhibition
- 25 Workplace Carer Champions trained
- 11 health liaison sessions embedded in primary care



Sandwell Carers Service



We deliver the Sandwell Carers Service on behalf of Sandwell Council, working in partnership with local organisations to ensure unpaid Carers across the borough's six towns can access information, advice and community-based support close to home. Click the logo to find out more.

Since launching in September 2025:

- 679 Carers registered in total, including 265 newly identified
- Connected with 373 attendees at 45 group sessions and events
- 204 Carer Friendly ID Cards helped Carers feel recognised
- 4,696 visits to our digital Carer support resources on our website
- 708 Carer contacts made
- 114 Wellbeing Assessments helped Carers reflect on the impact of their caring role

Our Delivery Partners

- Age Concern – Hub Service, Carer information and advice
- Age UK Sandwell – Community outreach and advice
- Midland Mencap – Training and tailored support for Parent Carers
- St Albans Community Centre – venue and community access

We make it easy for Carers to access support online and in person

- Information and advice about caring and local services
- Wellbeing checks and reflective conversations
- One-to-one support and key worker sessions
- Onward referrals and signposting
- Opportunities to connect through groups, drop-ins and community activity





Groups, connection and community

Groups and community activity create space for Carers to connect with others who understand caring, helping reduce isolation and build confidence. During the period, 45 group sessions and community events took place across libraries and local venues, including Carer support groups, dementia cafés, drop-ins, outreach sessions and one-off community events. Attendance was strong, with many Carers returning regularly and building connections over time.

In Carers' Words: "I loved attending and sharing information with others in similar situations."

Case study: Connection through community groups

A Carer attending a local library-based support group described how the group became a regular and valued part of their routine. Caring for a family member with dementia had left them feeling isolated, but meeting others with shared experiences helped rebuild confidence and reduce loneliness. The Carer said the group offered understanding, reassurance and a reason to take time for themselves.

Understanding Carer Wellbeing

Wellbeing checks give Carers space to reflect on different areas of their lives, including health, finances, relationships, feeling safe, and having time for themselves. Early wellbeing conversations highlighted that many Carers were finding it hardest to prioritise their own health and time away from caring. These insights help shape supportive conversations and ensure support is grounded in what Carers themselves identify as most important.

Case study: Digital support making a difference

During a period of high pressure and frequent hospital appointments, one Carer received a tablet through the Sandwell Carers Service. The device helped them book GP appointments, order medication, stay in touch with professionals and apply for Attendance Allowance. The Carer said the tablet made managing caring responsibilities easier at a very challenging time and helped them feel more in control.

Sandwell Carers Service

Sandwell Carers Service provides information, advice and community-based support for unpaid Carers across Sandwell's six towns. Delivered in partnership with local organisations, the service helps Carers feel recognised, connected and supported.

Since launching in September 2025:



679 Carers registered with the Sandwell Carers Service



142 Carers received direct support



16 Young Adult Carers (18–25) supported alongside education, work and caring



668 Carer enquiries responded to, leading to 708 individual contacts



45 group sessions and events delivered in local venues with 373 attendances



204 Carer Friendly ID Cards issued, helping Carers feel recognised and prepared



Wellbeing checks highlighted health and time out as the areas under greatest pressure



4,120 Carers visited our website for support



Carers supported people with dementia, physical disabilities, autism, long-term and mental health conditions

Social and Added Value:



Our Delivery Partners provide local support and knowledge



8 FTE roles created in Sandwell to deliver the service



75% of service staff have caring experience

Carer Friendly Dudley

Supporting adult Carers and Young Carers across Dudley

Carer Friendly Dudley brings together support for adult Carers and Young Carers, providing information, wellbeing support, activities and opportunities to connect, while building a Carer Friendly Community where Carers are recognised. Click the logo to find out more.



Adults Wellbeing Service

The Adults Wellbeing Service supports unpaid Carers aged 18 and over who are registered with Dudley Carers Hub, helping them manage the pressures of caring, access practical and wellbeing support, and feel recognised within their communities.

We were proud to be selected as a Finalist in the Dudley Community Action Awards as a ‘Beacon of Hope’.

In 2025:

- 308 Carers registered and supported
- 1,338 121 contacts and casework sessions
- 266 Referrals to other specialist or partner services
- 209 wellbeing assessments were carried out
- 1,000 Carers attended 140 groups and wellbeing activities
- We helped Carers identify welfare entitlements of on average £98.89 per week

“This has made a huge difference to my mental health and wellbeing, I feel less isolated, heard and feel that I’m not alone anymore”

Groups, activities and wellbeing

Group activities provide Carers with time away from caring, opportunities to learn new skills and the chance to connect with others who understand their experiences. There’s something for everyone, including; support groups, dementia groups, walking and wellbeing groups, benefits, finance and planning workshops

Case study: Carer A was overwhelmed looking after her mother with dementia and her own health needs. We provided benefits advice, connected her to a local group and organised a bus pass to help her attend sessions. A felt less isolated, more confident accessing support and better able to manage day-to-day pressures. ‘In my darkest hours, you were my salvation, my hope and light.’



Dudley Young Carers

Dudley Young Carers supports children and young people aged 5–18 who help care for a family member. Many balance caring with school, friendships and growing up, often without recognising themselves as Carers. The service focuses on early identification, ongoing support and opportunities for Young Carers to have time away from caring.

Having fun, making friends and time away from caring

Group activities and trips give Young Carers time away from caring, reduce isolation and help them build friendships with others who understand.

- 321 Young Carers registered for support
- 26 Young Carer group sessions and activities delivered
- 550+ attendances recorded across the year

Carer Friendly Schools

Our Carer Friendly Schools programme launched in September 2025, supporting earlier identification and better support for Young Carers in education settings.

- 3 schools now have a trained Young Carers Champion

Young Carer voice:

“It was nice to have a break from caring and just have fun.”

Social value and added value

Alongside core delivery, Dudley Young Carers secured additional funding and partnerships to extend opportunities for Young Carers and their families.

- We secured Holiday Activities Funding (HAF) to deliver 200 funded sessions for 70 young Carers aged 5–17 years.
- [Find out more](#) about spreading Christmas Cheer.
- £2,000 Winter HAF allowed us to run festive trips and activities and provide 25 Christmas Hampers.
- 60 Young Carers and family members enjoyed a visit to Legoland Discovery Centre thanks to the free Merlin tickets we sourced.
- Thanks to our partnership with Cash4Kids Mission Christmas, 200 Young Carers and families received Christmas presents worth £9,600.



Carer Friendly Dudley at a glance

Carer Friendly Dudley brings together the Adult Carers Wellbeing Service and the Dudley Young Carers Service. We provide access to information, wellbeing support, activities and opportunities to connect. In 2025...

Adult Carers



308 Carers registered;
1,953 one-to-one support sessions



7,790 Carers accessed online
resources; 2,590 Hidden Carers
identified



1,388 Carers attended 252 groups
and wellbeing activities

Young Carers



321 Young Carers registered and
accessing support



550 attendances over 26 group
sessions

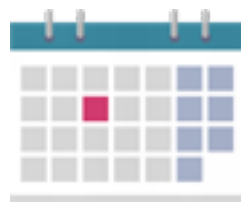


1,000 school students attended
young Carer awareness assemblies

Added Value



Grants and in-kind gifts worth over
£10,000 secured to expand our
impact



Over 250 additional sessions
funded for young Carers



We provided 43 Carers with free
bus travel, SIM cards and overnight
breaks through our partnerships

Carer Friendly Dudley is delivered by Forward Carers and commissioned by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, with additional funding from national and local partners.

Walsall Carers Hub



This service is delivered in partnership with Midland Mencap

Walsall Carers Hub is a single point of access for unpaid Carers across the borough, helping people recognise their caring role and access the right support earlier, in person or online. Click the logo to find out more.

2025 at a glance

- 338 Carers registered with Walsall Carers Hub
- 422 Carers accessed information, advice or ongoing support
- 88 wellbeing checks completed
- 75 Carers received one-to-one or casework support
- 43 Carers accessed welfare or benefits advice
- 12,000 visits accessing our online resources
- 258 Carers attended 49 group sessions and activities



‘As a caregiver, it’s nice to feel recognised, supported and rewarded by your team.’

Case study: finding the right support at the right time

After caring for her husband for several years, M contacted Walsall Carers Hub feeling exhausted and unsure what support was available. Through the Hub, she received a wellbeing check, benefits advice and was introduced to a local Carer group. M felt less isolated and more confident to continue in her caring role.

Our Carer events are a great way for Carers to find out about support and connect to services.

[Find out more here.](#)

‘I’ve learned a lot and met other Carers who really understand.’

Empowering Carers:

- Our Carers Rights Day events and advice ensure Carers feel informed
- We support Carers to access their welfare entitlements
- We help Carers join the Priority Services Register so families can get support with bills

Social Value: supporting Carers beyond core services

Alongside core support, Forward Carers sources additional funding and delivers extra services to help Carers stay connected.

- 12 free bus passes helped Carers attend appointments, groups and activities
- We provide free data sims to help Carers struggling financially



Dorset Carers Card

The Dorset Carers Card scheme provides registered Carers with a physical Carer Friendly ID Card.

The card is a gateway to accessing a growing and well-maintained range of local and national discount and offers that are relevant, varied, and refreshed regularly. By building a Carer Friendly Community that understands Carers and recognises the ID card, Carers feel valued and supported across daily life. Click the image to find out more.



Over the past three years:

- 4,078 Carers have taken up a Carer Friendly ID Card with ICE details
- 488 discounted offers have been secured for Carers, with an average saving of 15%
- 443 organisations are now recognised as Carer Friendly spaces across Dorset
- We have raised Carer awareness with 784 businesses
- 51 Carer Friendly health awards to GPs in partnership with Dorset Healthcare University Trust
- Engaged with over 1,000 Carers and 300 Professionals to raise awareness
- Built relationships with 48 community groups to create links and strengthen referrals
- 3,600 Carers receive our Carers Journey online resources

We run regular online Discovery Sessions, so Carers can make the most of their ID Card and find out about their right to support and rights in the workplace. In Carers' Words: "I am so glad I came today. There is so much more available than people know. Thank you for all you do. Carers need this."

Recognition and partnership

In 2024, the Dorset Carers Card service was recognised by ADASS (the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) as an example of Great Practice in Carer support and included in the national Supporting Carers Hub, to share and celebrate impactful Carer support.

[Find out more](#)



Carer Friendly Wiltshire



Carer Friendly Wiltshire is a digital-first, countywide service supporting unpaid Adult Carers, Young Adult and Young Carers to recognise their caring role, access the Carer Friendly ID card, practical support and connect with Carer Friendly spaces across Wiltshire.

Click the logo to find out more.

2025 at a glance:

- 45,000+ users accessed Carer Friendly Wiltshire digital content
- 30,000 new users engaged with the service for the first time
- 16,313 resource views across online tools and information
- 867 Carers registered for a Carer Friendly ID Card
- 44 organisations signed up as Carer Friendly



Digital support shaped by Young Carers

We co-designed a dedicated online space for Young Carers with young people themselves, creating age-appropriate guidance on caring and wellbeing, information on education, financial support and local services, Young Carers ID Card information and activities and In Our Own Words stories to help peers feel understood and less alone.

Creating Carer Friendly Wiltshire

Alongside digital support, we provide the Carer Friendly ID Card for Carers. We run online sessions and work with employers, businesses and community organisations to increase understanding of caring and embed Carer Friendly practice.

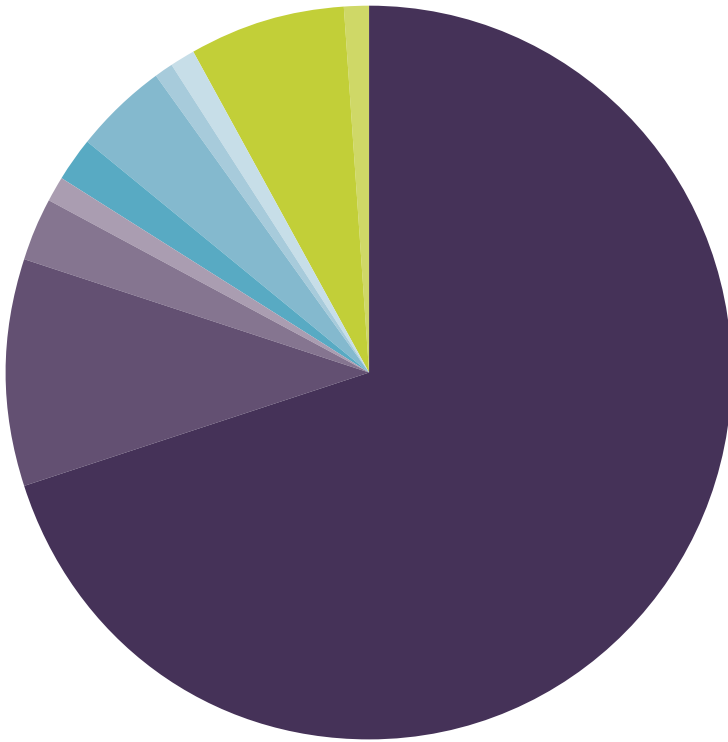
- Weekly multi-generational online support sessions
- Regular Discovery sessions helped Carers maximise the value of their card
- 44 organisations have signed up to offer support to card holders
- All ID Cards include emergency contact details

“The Young Carers page is informative... it is definitely a good website to use!”

Chloe, Young Carers Council

When a Carer receives a Carer Friendly Card, their details are securely shared with the local authority so emergency plans can be checked, support offered, and the right help triggered quickly if a crisis occurs.

Forward Carers Financials 2025



Income

● Birmingham Carers Hub	£3,253,114	70%
● Birmingham Young Carers	£453,529	10%
● Dudley Wellbeing Service	£128,358	3%
● Dudley Young Carers	£67,164	1%
● Walsall Carers Service	£112,188	2%
● Sandwell Carers Service	£175,000	4%
● Dorset Carer ID Cards	£34,286	1%
● Wiltshire Online Service	£64,375	1%
● Grant Income	£307,184	7%
● Other trading income and Interest	£42,473	1%
Total	£4,637,672	



Expenditure*

● FC Programme and Admin	£1,138,552	25%
● Grant Payments for Carer Projects	£676,887	15%
● Delivery Partner Payments	£2,253,493	49%
● Activities & Events	£47,309	1%
● Carer Wellbeing Grants	£504,301	11%
Total	£4,620,542	

*as a not-for-profit Community Interest Company, 100% of any surplus is invested into our mission to create Carer Friendly Communities



Forward Carers has been empowering unpaid Carers to live fulfilling lives since 2014. We are an award winning not-for-profit social enterprise, Community Interest Company (CIC). We work in partnership with non-profits, statutory services and the healthcare sector to achieve our mission to create Carer Friendly Communities, places that understand, value and support unpaid Carers.

forwardcarers.org.uk

Scan to see
all our links



With our most sincere thanks and appreciation to our Delivery Partners, community partners and funders who make this all possible

Supported by



Wiltshire Council



Walsall Council

